

# Introduction to the Planning Process

Presentation to D-E NCA Advisory Council

January 5, 2011



# Developing a new Resource Management Plan (RMP)

3



## What is an RMP?

- Long-range plan to ensure that the public lands are managed sustainably (according to the Federal Land Policy and Management Act) and in accordance with other laws, policies, etc.

## What kinds of decisions are made in an RMP?

- Allocation-level decisions, which are broad in focus and take a long-term approach
- Guide management of the NCA's resources and resource uses for the next 10-20 years

## What will this RMP replace?

- 1987 Grand Junction RMP
- 1989 Uncompahgre Basin RMP



# Legislative Guidelines

BLM planning is guided by many different types of legislation

## General Planning

- National Environmental Policy Act of 1969
- Federal Land Policy Management Act of 1976
- Federal Advisory Council Act of 1972

## Conservation

- The Wilderness Act of 1964
- The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968



Taken from  
<http://wilderness.org/content/wilderness-act-1964>

## Cultural Resource Protection

- The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966
- The Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979
- The Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990

## Biological Resource Protection

- The Endangered Species Act of 1973

There are also many executive orders, and BLM policy manuals that guides our planning process



# The Omnibus Public Lands Management Act of 2009

- “To conserve and protect for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations” the following unique and important resources:

- Geological
- Cultural
- Archaeological
- Paleontological
- Natural

- Scientific
- Recreational
- Wilderness
- Wildlife
- Riparian

- Historical
- Educational
- Scenic
- Water





# The Omnibus Public Lands Management Act of 2009

This act also mandated that:

- The BLM only allow uses that further the purposes for which the NCA is established

- The plan be developed with extensive public input

- The plan include a comprehensive travel management plan that limits motorized travel to designated roads and trails

- The NCA be withdrawn from entry for mining, drilling and geothermal development

- The formation of an advisory council with specific guidelines for representation

- The BLM continue to issue and administer grazing leases or permits in the NCA





# PLANNING PROCESS OVERVIEW

Public Scoping

→ Ended October 1, 2010

Analyze the  
Management Situation

We are here

→ Through Feb 2011

Develop RMP Alternatives

→ Approx. October 2011

Environmental Effects Analysis

→ Approx. January 2012

Draft RMP/EIS  
(Document) Issued

→ Approx. August 2012

Public Comment

→ August 2012-November  
2012

Final RMP/EIS  
(Document) Issued

→ Approx. January 2013

Protest Period

→ Approx. January 2013-  
March 2013

Decision

→ Approx. May 2013





# What have we done so far?

## **Public Input**

- Recreation/wilderness Focus Group Meetings led by Tim Casey of Mesa State
- Recreation user surveys by Mesa State (set to finalize a report of findings soon)
- Wild and Scenic River Stakeholder group meetings (ongoing)
- Travel Management open houses and comment period (ends May 1)
- Public Scoping

## **Cooperating Agencies**

- Secured cooperating agency agreements with 7 government agencies
  - Mesa, Delta and Montrose counties
  - Cities of Grand Junction, Delta and Montrose
  - US Forest Service
  - Colorado Division of Natural Resources
- Pursued tribal consultations with 3 Native American Tribal Governments

## **Data Collection and Preparation**

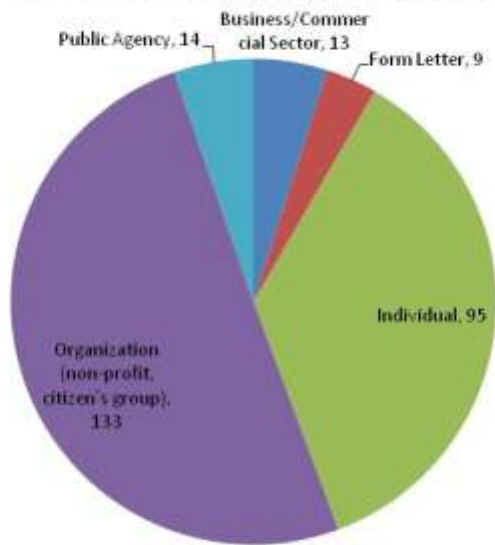
- Analysis of the Management Situation, which describes:
  - Current Condition of the NCA
  - Current Management of the NCA
  - Adequacy of Current Management of the NCA
  - Opportunities for Management in the NCA



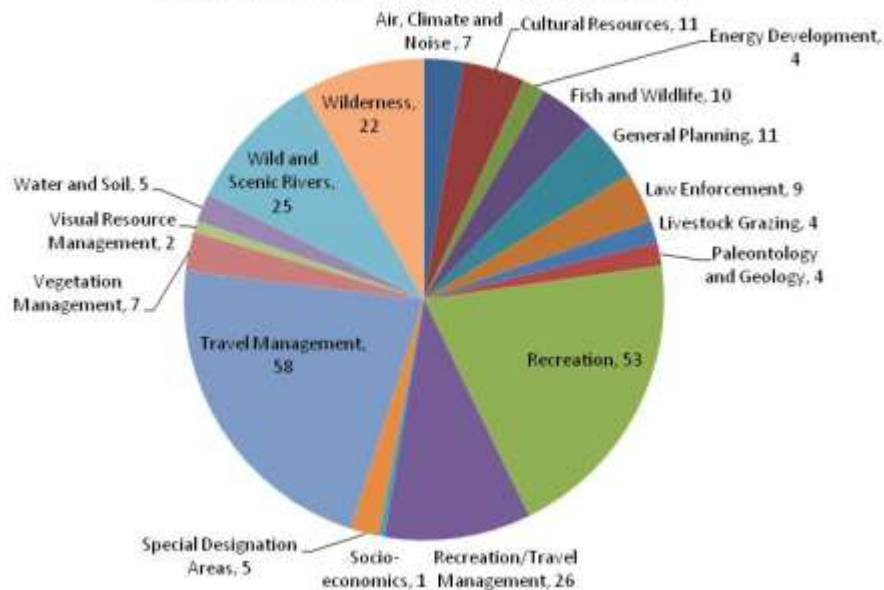
# What have we done so far?

**Scoping:** the BLM received 66 unique submissions during the scoping period from August 3, 2010 to October 1, 2010. This yielded a total of 264 separate comments.

Scoping Comments by Affiliation



Scoping Comments by Issue Category







# Where are we going next?

**Alternative Development:** the BLM must develop a *reasonable* range of alternative management scenarios for the NCA

**Impact Analysis:** the BLM must analyze the impact of each of its alternative management scenarios





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# Planning Issues- Travel Management



## Types of Travel Management Decisions

1. Resource Management Plan (RMP) Decisions
  - \* Designation of motorized areas: Open, Closed, or Limited
2. Implementation Decisions
  - \* Designation of individual routes in Limited areas



## Planning Questions

- What route system is needed to provide the kinds of recreational opportunities that the public seeks?
- How should the BLM design a route system that manages to protect other NCA resources (wildlife, plants, cultural, wilderness)?

The BLM held open houses for travel management on September 9 and 10



# Planning Issues- Recreation

## Some Planning Questions

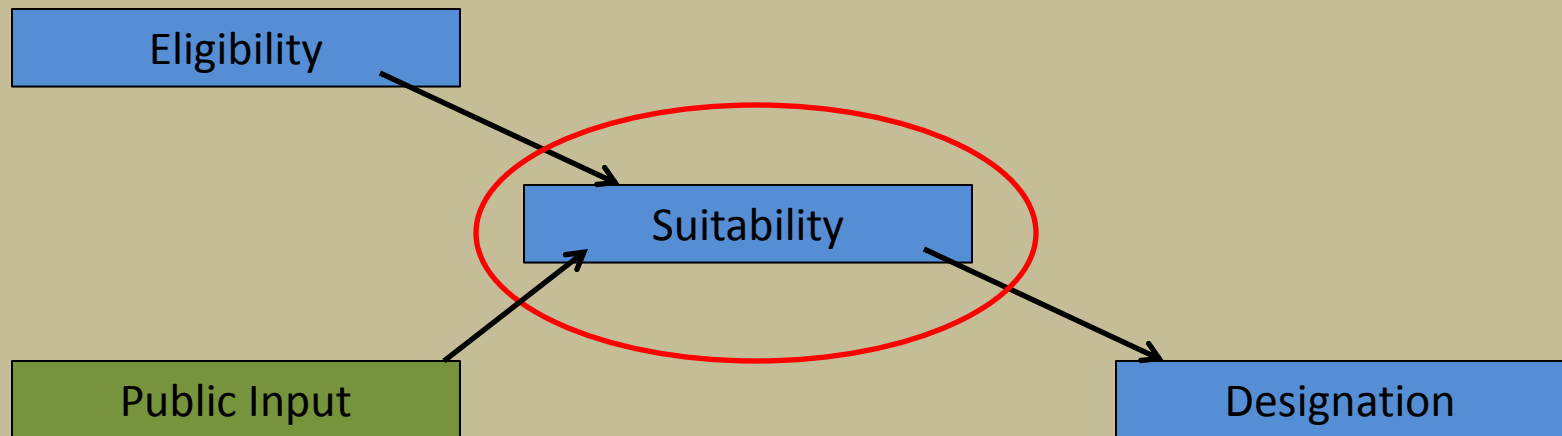
- What types of recreational experiences should we manage for?
- Where should we manage for different recreational experiences?
- Where should the BLM construct recreational facilities like trails, information kiosks and staging areas?
- How should we provide for recreational experiences, while still protecting the other resources of the NCA?
- How can recreation benefit the communities surrounding the NCA?





# Planning Issues- Wild and Scenic Rivers

- There are 11 segments (on 7 rivers/creeks) within the NCA that were determined to be eligible for Wild and Scenic River designation



**Eligibility:** Is the segment “free flowing” and does it possess at least 1 “outstandingly remarkable value”?

**Suitability:** Can the BLM manage for the protection of the segment?  
Are there other management options that would protect the segment?

**Designation:** Determination made by Congress





# Questions and Discussion

